



PREFACE

The crime rate continues to rise, but the rate of increase has slowed.

The total increase in the index crime rate is less than half of the previous year's increase four percent for 1990 as opposed to ten percent in 1989.

The disturbing trend, however, is in the area of violent crime. Violent crime murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault is up 12 percent in North Carolina, compared to 11 percent the previous year.

These cold, hard figures tell us very clearly that North Carolina is not immune to the epidemic of violent crime that is sweeping across the nation. There are several factors contributing to the increase in violent crime here in our state.

Most significant is the continuing plague of illegal drugs and drug abuse. Many drug users commit crimes while under the influence of drugs. Other drug users commit crimes especially robbery to obtain money to buy drugs, and still other violent crimes occur as part of being involved in the drug business or culture.

Our overburdened criminal justice system also figures into the increase in violent crime. In North Carolina, with one offender being let out of prison for every one going in, criminals are put back on the street where they are likely to repeat their offense or commit other types of crime.

In fact, many offenders entering prison would still have been in prison for a prior offense, if they had severed out their original sentence.

Our law enforcement officers even with their limited resources, in terms of budgets and manpower are carrying more than their share of the criminal justice system's load.

Over the past year, in the face of a 12 percent violent crime increase, our law enforcement officers in North Carolina increased their arrest rates for violent crime by 26 percent. But until our prosecutors, courts, and prisons are given adequate resources, our law enforcement officers will have to continue swimming against the tide.

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